

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
April 8, 2013

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Freudmann, Keane, Moran, Paterson, Paulhus, Ryan, Schaefer, Shapiro
Excused: Kochenburger

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2012 meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Ryan who abstained. Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2013 special meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Proposed FY 2013/14 Budget

The Town Clerk read the legal notice.

Howard Raphaelson, Timber Drive, thanked the Council for their work and their willingness to support the programs the Town currently provides. Mr. Raphaelson noted that everyone he talks to likes the Town the way it is. He also urged support for the Community Center as a department and as a business.

Cathleen Sutherland, Mansfield Center of Nursing and Rehabilitation Administrator, urged the Town to use the recently acquired accessible van to augment the transportation needs of their patients and residents. (Letter attached)

Alison Hilding, Southwood Road, questioned the use of one shot revenues in the budget and allocation of funds for Town newsletter. Ms. Hilding believes the estimated cost of the publication is low and questioned the motivation of the newsletter.

Ric Hossack, Middle Turnpike, asked a series of questions about the budget and funding sources and urged the Council to reduce the cost of government.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, requested the Council review the need for additional police coverage, raise taxes to pay for the \$400,000 for school repairs, and questioned the need for a newsletter.

Mary Hirsch, Courtyard Lane, is a charter member of the Community Center and understands that member fees help support the entire program. Ms. Hirsch asked the Council to support the education budget and the additional trooper but not to support the newsletter, as it is unnecessary.

Mark Flynn, Jude Lane, stated his belief that we currently have a sufficient police, and fire presence. Mr. Flynn also questioned why the budget is voted on at a town meeting and not at the polls.

The public hearing was closed at 8:01 p.m.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Mike Sikoski, Windham, posed a number of questions. (Statement attached)

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Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, requested the Council not approve the hiring of legal counsel as requested in item 4 of this evening's agenda and questioned why a report in an agreement concerning counsel for the Kirby Mill project was not provided to her when requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Ric Hossack, Middle Turnpike, stated the Council should not engage legal counsel for the water and wastewater project and asked how much the consultant used for the Downtown Partnership's Strategic Plan cost. Mr. Hossack submitted a copy of the letter he sent to Hartford Courant columnist Tom Condon and asked the Mansfield Independent News publication be referenced in the minutes. (Letter attached)

Alison Hilding, Southwood Road, requested a total of the 2012 expenditures for all outsourcing and consulting work done for the Town.

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded to move Item 3, Appointment of Special Legal Counsel for Water and Wastewater Project, as the next item on the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

V. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

In addition to his report Town Manager Matt Hart offered his congratulations to Alan Hawkins who will be inducted into the Connecticut State Firefighters Association Hall of Fame. Mr. Hart remarked that public comments regarding the budget would be addressed at the next budget session; the questions raised by the public concerning personnel matters are still under investigation and the reason savings are not being realized as a result of recent public work terminations is because the positions are being filled.

The Town Manager will provide information as to the total amount spent on all outsourcing and consulting work done for the Town and will report back concerning the requested report on the Kirby Mill hydroelectric project. As to the referenced fire in the Storrs Center project, Mr. Hart has no information regarding any such fire.

VI. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Paterson noted the passing of Gwen Duff who served the Town in so many ways over the years. Gwen was a music teacher, active in the Senior Center, and cofounder of Holiday Hill Day Camp. She will be missed.

Mayor Paterson also reported on a birthday party she attended in honor of Rose Ferreri's 103rd birthday. Ms. Ferreri has lived in the area for 99 years and operated Storrs Drugs for many years.

Mayor Paterson will be in Hartford later this week lobbying with CCM to discuss the effect proposed cuts will have on the Town.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

2. Storrs Center Update

Mansfield Downtown Partnership Executive Director Cynthia van Zelm, Director of Public Works Lon Hultgren and Managing Member of Leyland Alliance LLC Howard Kaufman updated the Council regarding the status of leasing, construction and other issues related to the Storrs Center project.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

3. Appointment of Special Legal Counsel for Water and Wastewater Project

Attorneys Teno West and Bruce Toby commented on the qualifications and experience their firm could bring to discussions and decisions concerning water in Mansfield. Town Manager Matt Hart noted UConn has made it clear that they are getting out of the business of providing water to off campus facilities and consequently it is important for the Town to work with experts in the field of water governance.

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded, effective April 8, 2013, to authorize the Town Manager to begin negotiations with the firm of Pannone, Lopes, Deveraux & West, LLC to serve as special legal counsel for the Town of Mansfield to assist with water supply issues and related matters contingent upon the final agreement including time frames, project descriptions, and cost and being brought back to the Council for approval prior to any agreement being signed.
The motion passed unanimously.

4 Review Charge to Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Mr. Freudmann moved, effective April 8, 2013, to ask the Town Manager to advise the Mansfield Downtown Partnership that it was designated as the Town's Municipal Development Agency for Storrs Center only and to recommend to the Mansfield Downtown Partnership that its bylaws and mission statement accurately reflect that. Garnering no second, the motion failed.

5. Presentation on Solarize Mansfield-Windham Program

Recycling Coordinator Virginia Walton introduced the Solarize Mansfield-Windham program sponsored by the State's Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority and update the Council on its progress. The Town has already reached tier 2 with additional residents expressing interest in the pilot program.

6. Historic Documents Preservation Grant

Mr. Schaefer moved and Ms. Moran seconded to approve the following resolution:
Resolved: that Matthew W. Hart, Town Manager, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut State Library for a Historic Documents Preservation Grant.
Motion passed unanimously.

7. Fair Housing Resolution

Mr. Schaefer moved to adopt the Fair Housing Resolution as found on page 146 of the April 8, 2013 Town Council packet.
Motion passed unanimously.

8. Memorial Day Ceremonial Presentation Planning Subcommittee

By consensus Council members agreed to appoint Ms. Moran, Mr. Paulhus and Mr. Kochenbuger to the Subcommittee.

IX. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No comments offered.

X. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Finance Committee Chair Bill Ryan reported a recommendation to fund the information technology and maintenance repairs to the schools will be presented to the Council during the April 15, 2013 budget workshop. Mr. Freudmann stated he voted against the recommendation in the Subcommittee.

Mr. Shapiro, filling in for the Chair of the Committee on Committees offered the following recommendations:

The appointment of Ed Hall to the Agriculture Committee as an alternate for a term ending 10/12/2014 and Wesley Bell to the full position for a term ending 10/12/2014

The appointment of Ed Neumann to the Four Corners Water and Sewer Advisory Committee

Motion passed unanimously.

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XI. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATONS

9. B. Heiss re: Senior Center Budget
10. A. Holinko re: Human Services Positions
11. S. Levinson re: Bridge Class
12. Testimony Regarding Governor's Proposed FY 2013/14 Budget
13. CCM Legislative Alert re: Education Committee Makes Changes to Education Funding in Governor's Proposed FY 2013/14 Budget
14. Corporation for National and Community Service re: University of Connecticut
15. Human Rights Campaign Foundation re: 2013 Municipal Equality Index
16. Proclamation Celebrating 101 Years of Girl Scouting
17. Courant.com "New Storrs Center Showcases Smart Growth" - 04/04/13

XII. FUTURE AGENDA

Mr. Freudmann requested the use of reserve funds to support the operating budget be reviewed and a policy be established.
By consensus the Council agreed the Finance Committee should be asked to add the issue to a future agenda.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Shapiro seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk

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